

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Tuesday, March 24, 2015

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## **End of Grade Test by Smarter Balance Administered Statewide Base Measurement of Improved Standards in Math & English Language Arts / Literacy**

(Boise) The Smarter Balanced Assessments, known as SBAC, will be administered for the year end assessment statewide. The end-of-grade test is required by the state and federal government and will measure math and English language arts/literacy along with critical thinking skills aligned to Idaho's higher standards. The new assessment is considered a "baseline" measure for grades 3-8 and once in high school and should not be compared to previous year-end assessments.

Since the new assessments measure higher standards, the definition of grade level performance is also more rigorous than it was with old tests. Officials anticipate fewer students initially meeting grade level standards. This does not mean that students are doing worse than previous years, but that students are being assessed by higher standards and results will improve over time as more years of instruction reflect the new standards. The data will help teachers and parents know whether students are on track for college and career readiness.

"A true picture of student achievement will be determined over several years as we teach to improved standards in Idaho," said Sherri Ybarra, Superintendent of Public Instruction. "I am a strong advocate of using multiple measures over time to assess student achievement. This test is a base line measure of our student's math and English language skills and we will need several years of data."

The assessment includes computer adaptive tests that are customized to each student. The difficulty of questions changes based on the student responses and provides more precise information about student achievement in less time than a fixed form test. It will take several days for schools to complete and it is estimated that elementary students will take 3.5 hours for the language arts section and 2.5 hours for the math section. High school students will take approximately 4 hours and 3.5 hours, respectively on the tests and testing can occur in multiple sessions. The testing window begins March 30<sup>th</sup> through May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

As part of implementing the higher standards, the Smarter Balanced assessments (SBAC) are a part of preparing all students for success in college and careers. The Smarter Balanced Assessments measure real world skills in English and math, such as analytical reading, persuasive writing, problem solving and critical thinking. Math will include concepts and procedures, problem solving and modeling/data analysis and communicating reasoning.

Idaho students have taken a version of the Smarter Balanced Assessments for the past two years but this represents the first score or base line measurement. Smarter Balance allows for interim assessments to afford teachers the opportunity to monitor student progress throughout the year and to help teachers improve instruction. The system includes a Digital Library – an online collection of resources and practices that teachers can use throughout the year. It encourages collaboration and interaction.

Please visit [www.sde.idaho.gov](http://www.sde.idaho.gov) and click Smarter Balanced located on the home page for a wide array of information and sample test questions. For more detailed information, contact Angela Hemingway at (208) 332-6876.

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